6:Cook M-3,4 (ca. 1900) 1909
SP9 Caraja SP9

CHAPTER IX.

KARAYÁ ACTIVITIES.—CANOE MAKING.—WEAPONS.—NATURE MADE UTENSILS.—ORNAMENT MAKING.—FAMILY LIFE.—PRIMITIVE ETHICS.—MARRIAGES.—CHILDREN.—GOVERNMENT.

THE industrial activities of the Karayá now make a better showing than in former times, for their primitive tools are now more and more replaced by tools introduced from the civilized world. The old stone-axes have disappeared, and little is known of them. Ancient inscriptions and figures upon the rocks represent men with stone-axes in their hands, but these drawings belong to a remote period.

To-day, the only primitive implements of the Karayá are those that Nature furnishes them ready for use. Their scraping tools, for instance, are sharp-edged shells; their chisel-like instruments are the teeth of certain powerful rodents; and smooth, flat stones, formed by the action of the water, are used as discs upon which to beat and prepare the web of bark which is their cloth.

It cannot be said of the Karayá that their primitive industries have fallen, in any degree, into decay because they have begun to use the tools of civilized men. Adaptability, beauty of form, and carefulness of execution, is evident in all their workmanship. Canoe building among them, for instance, has reached a high degree of perfection, though the method of constructing them is very crude. These canoes, which are all dugouts, are long and slim, and taper gradually to a point at both bow and stern. This form is perhaps best

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as a reserve, are kept wound around the bow. The Karayá take great pride in their bows, ornamenting them beautifully with tassels of brilliant feathers.

They use several different styles of arrows. Some are harpoon-like for fishing purposes; others are made with broad blades for hunting; while still others are for use in war. They are all made with the utmost care, as much as one or two days being consumed in the making of but one. Two or three different kinds of wood are always used in constructing a single arrow, one kind being for the spear, or lance part, another kind—heavy palm wood—for the middle staff, and light bamboo wood for the base, and all are spliced and bound together with the greatest nicety by means of long, narrow strips of bark taken from certain climbers, and finally, the weapon is burnished. It is about four feet in length.

The weapons used for fighting at close quarters, which is the method of warfare liked best, are heavy clubs and lances. The clubs are of two kinds—first, shovel-like clubs and round clubs, resembling base-ball bats, varying in length from three to four and a half feet. The lances are nine or ten feet in length, the shaft being of palm wood, and the point, the shin-bone of the spotted *onca*—jaguar—or of a deer. A beautiful, basket-like work of black and white wooden strips is woven, or braided, tightly over the shaft of the spear, and to this is attached tassels of brilliant plumage. The Karayá have spear-throwing sticks, but I understand they are no longer used in war, but for sport only. The contrivance is a long strip of wood so formed that it can be used, sling-like to hurl a spear. In common with all the savage tribes of South America, the weapons, implements, ornaments and ceremonial instruments are all made by the men of the Karayá, while the women make only the household utensils.

The Karayá housewife, therefore, makes several styles of pots and pans; but pottery has not yet reached a very high degree of perfection with this tribe for the forms are simple and crude. They do not make pots in the form of natural objects as do the tribes of the Xingú river. Utility, and this